

FELH, JESSE W.

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Abraham Lincoln's Contemporaries

Jesse W. Fell

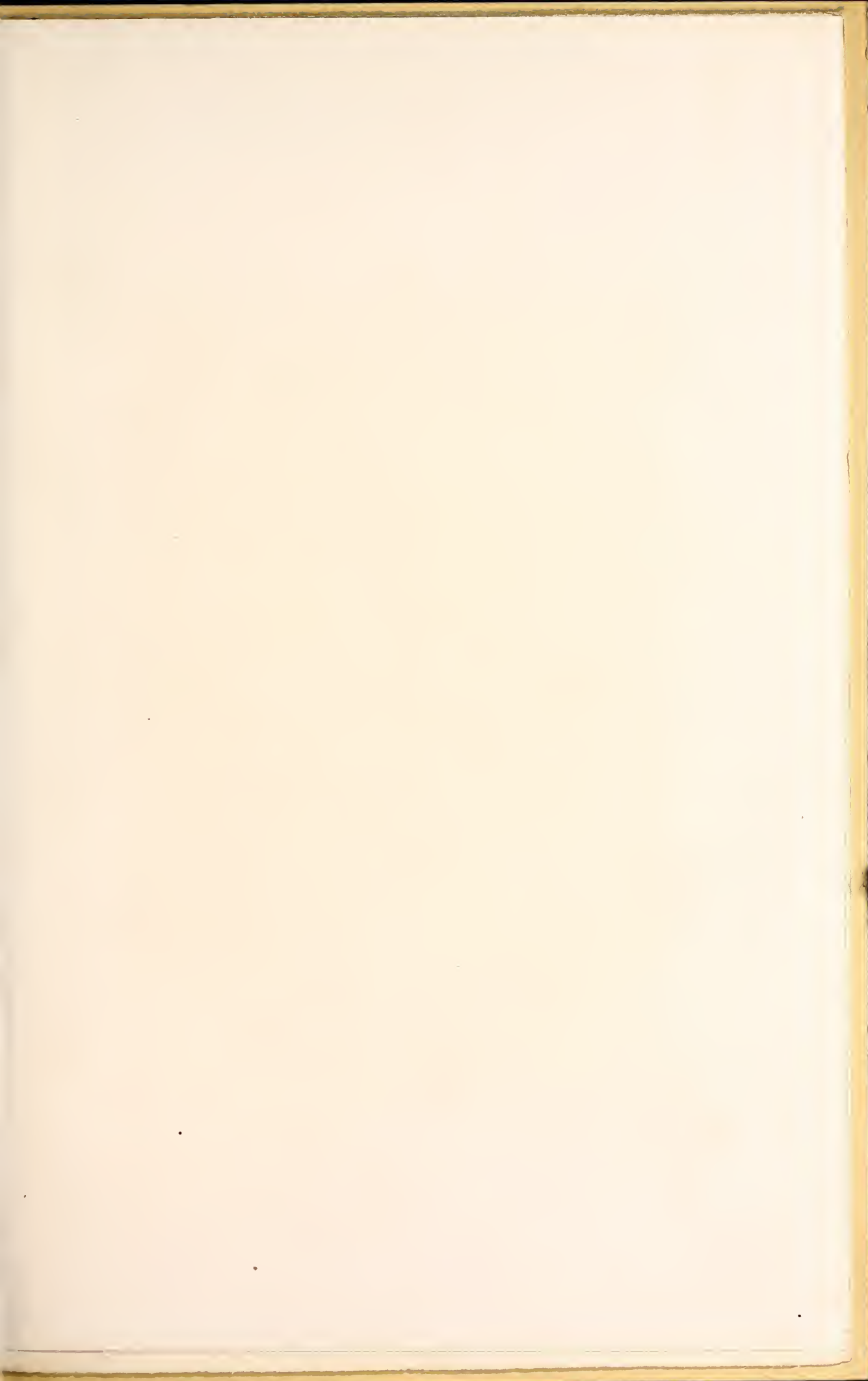
Excerpts from newspapers and other
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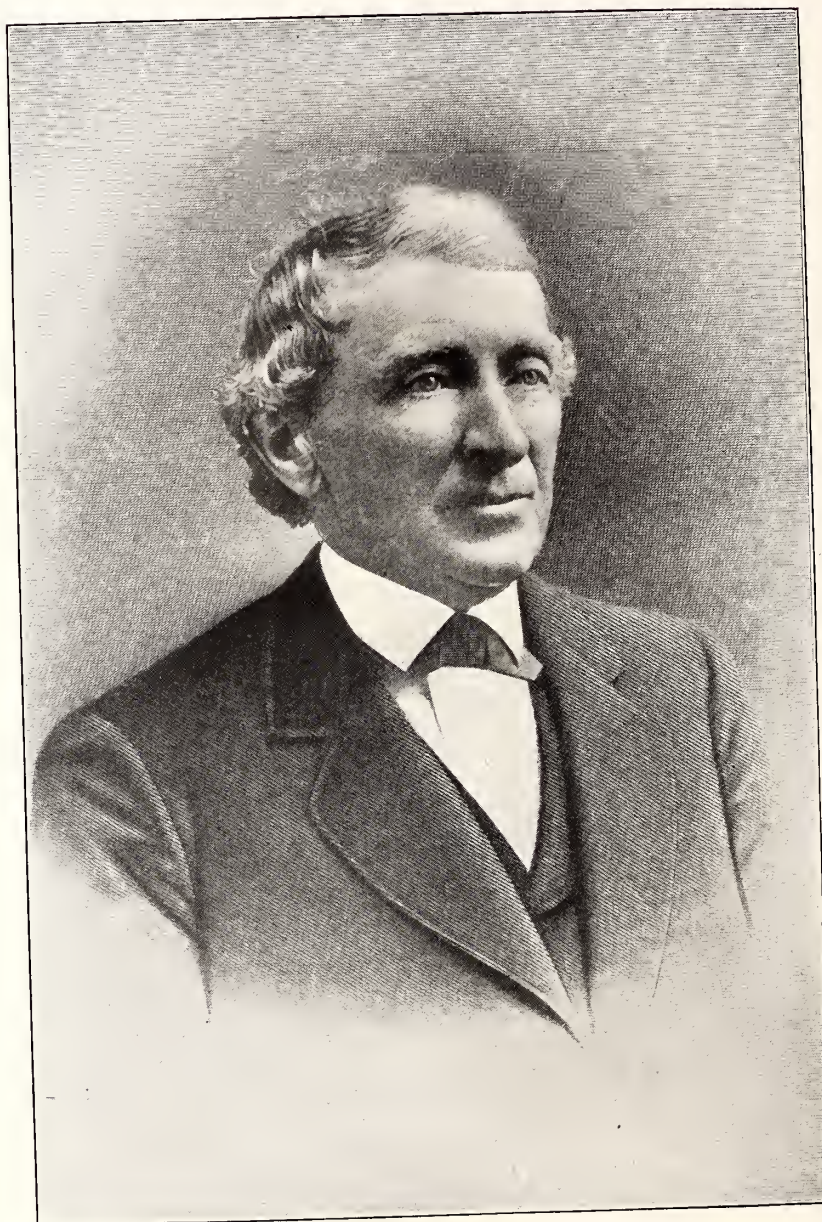
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Jesse W. Fell.







JESSE W. FELL.

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**Jesse W. Fell Memorial Gateway, State Normal University
Campus.**

Not to many communities is it given to pass through a scene that paralleled that at Normal campus on Monday, June 5, 1916. Not too frequently does a locality gather its individuals together just for the honor and the memory of one man. Usually it is events, crises, measures of great interest that call together crowds of the old and thinking people of two cities—not solely the reverence they bear to the life, character and achievements of one man.

Not so on this occasion.

There gathered early in the afternoon, more than 1,500 people, coming into the campus at the Normal University with one name on their lips, one thought, to publicly dedicate a gateway that should stand as long as stone lasts, to be an inspiration to generations of students, and upon which there will live the name of Jesse W. Fell, "lover and planter of trees."

The name of Jesse W. Fell has been associated with that of Normal and the Normal University as long as either of these two have existed. Both held places in the heart of Jesse W. Fell; for both he planned and worked, and whether it was his home town, the Normal he had brought into being, or whether it was the university and all the big plans that he had for it, either had full measure of his love. And so, his name has been associated with the town and the school as a part of it. Little more than a year ago, a plan was born, through which it was to be possible to show in some way appreciation, and to show it in a way that he would have enjoyed and which should go on with the work of combining into one, the town and school as he himself had planned.

The Woman's Improvement League of Normal, of which Mrs. D. C. Smith is president, launched the plan that was here shown in its completeness. This association, aided by other friends of Mr. Fell, spent time and thought before the achieve-

ment was reached. That it should be a gateway connecting the town and the school—eminently what he would have liked; that it should be plain, noble in design, thought out by artists, executed in the best way—was the material end of the plans.

Just southwest of the gate had been erected a platform, which was banked with flowers. About it was a semi-circle of seats, and all that had been provided were needed when the hour came. Upon the platform were seated the presiding officer and the speakers.

The program had been arranged to include those men who knew Jesse W. Fell and that each speaker should tell what had come in his direct knowledge of the life of the beloved man.

Colonel D. C. Smith of Normal was presiding officer and music was furnished by the Choral Club of the university.

The program included:

President David Felmley of the Normal University—"The Debt the Normal University Owes to Jesse W. Fell."

President Edmund J. James of the University of Illinois.

President John W. Cook of the Northern Illinois Normal School at DeKalb—"Personal Reminiscences."

Captain J. H. Burnham—"Jesse W. Fell, the Philanthropist of Mighty Vision."

Generous extracts from these addresses are included in this article.

President David Felmley was the first speaker. He began by tracing the many interests and strong enthusiasms of Mr. Fell, and then passed to the man as a lover of nature and its meanings. Of this he said:

"In his boyhood Mr. Fell had as a teacher Joshua Hoopes, a famous schoolmaster of Chester County, Pennsylvania, one of the best botanists of his day. Jesse Fell was more than a pupil. He became a companion of his master, and under him developed a lifelong interest in trees and flowers. It was in the early forties that Mr. Fell began to manifest his passion for tree planting. A year spent on the open prairie northeast of Bloomington probably hastened the conviction that nothing was more necessary to the taming of the prairie than to plant it with trees. At first the black locust, with its rapid growth and durable wood, finely adapted for fencing, attracted his attention. When the borers attacked the young locust groves, he tried other trees in our prairie soils—hard and soft

maples, ash and box elder, American and British elm, linden, catalpa, tulip tree, European larch and many evergreens were planted in great numbers by him. It is said that 13,000 trees had been planted by him along the streets of Normal and in the grounds about his residence when there were still hardly a dozen houses in the present town. He brought to Bloomington, Mann, Overman, Phoenix and other men who made Bloomington one of the largest nursery centers in the country.

"In 1867 Mr. Fell was appointed the local member of the board of education, the position now held by Mr. Capen. He at once secured an appropriation of \$3,500 from the legislature for the proper planting of the campus, a project that had always been near his heart. William Saunders, the foremost landscape gardener of the day, had been brought on from Philadelphia eight years before to make a suitable plan. The planting was done under Mr. Fell's personal management, many fine trees being transplanted from his own private grounds known as Fell Park. The original plantings in the campus included almost every species that would flourish in this soil and climate. After the losses incident to storm and sleet, the ravages of borers and to the removal of trees to make way for new buildings, we still had in 1901, 940 trees of forty-one species. The great storm of June 10, 1902, destroyed many of these, but later plantings have more than replaced the losses in numbers and variety.

"In summing up the services of Jesse W. Fell to the Normal University, we do not forget that the best part of it has not yet been told. In viewing this memorial that his friends have erected, we are not unmindful that its highest values are not those of the mason or of the brass founder, nor are they to be found in the taste and skill of the architect who planned the work, or of the artists who have designed the bronzes. They are to be found in the character of the man whose name this memorial bears and whose services it commemorates.

"But Jesse Fell was not merely great in the excellence of his character, in his honesty, his unselfishness, his kind heartedness, his patriotism, as abstract qualities; he was pre-eminently a man of action. We honor him for what he did, both for the kind of enterprises he undertook and the spirit in which he wrought. Mr. Fell had faith in the future. He saw the great city of Bloomington in the straggling, unkempt

country village of eighty years ago; he saw in Normal the seat of a great educational institution; he saw in Illinois a real empire state, great in its natural resources, greater still in intellectual and moral worth, and he shaped his life in accordance with these visions. Some men called him visionary. Like all other seers, he merely lived in advance of his generation. His only mistakes seemed to have been in underestimating the amount of time needed for the realization of his hopes.

"The greatest indebtedness of the Normal University to Jesse Fell is the example of his life, his character and his worth. It is difficult to summarize in a few words the character of Jesse W. Fell. I have read the estimates placed upon him by more than a score of his contemporaries, the men who knew him well and were abundantly able to set forth their estimate of his character. They all testify to his superlative worth as a man and as a citizen. Yet it seems that no two have viewed his life from the same angle, nor have caught the same radiant light from the soul within. His most conspicuous quality seems to have been his energy. While other men thought and planned and talked, Jesse Fell brought to pass. He possessed a genius for accomplishment, tireless energy, undaunted courage, and a persistence that was rarely unsuccessful. He was a born leader, skillful to plan, to organize, to enlist aid and sympathy, to convince and persuade, to subdue opposition, to kindle in others the flame of his own enthusiasm. He was a born advocate, skillful yet fair to his opponents, more anxious to persuade them than to overwhelm them.

"Others who knew him personally will speak at length of his personal characteristics. For me, it is enough to say in closing that this memorial has been erected in order that we may show to our children and to our children's children the type of man that we delight to honor, the citizen of whom we are justly proud."

PRESIDENT JAMES' ADDRESS.

President Edmund J. James of the University of Illinois was not able to be present, but he prepared and sent a paper in which there were many references to incidents that might have passed by others. The paper was read by Prof. C. Wool-

bert of the University of Illinois. It was in part as follows:

"Fellow Citizens: It was a little over fifty-three years ago that I first saw Jesse W. Fell. It was on occasion of a visit of my parents to the Illinois State Normal University who, in looking for a place to buy a farm and settle down permanently, as they expressed it, were especially concerned about the schools of the neighborhood. They had examined one or two farms north of Normal and were making a special visit to the Normal school to see whether the educational facilities offered there seemed to meet their desires as to the opportunities for their children. I was tagging as a lad eight years old after my mother as she went into the primary room, then conducted by Miss Hammond, who afterwards became the wife of W. L. Pillsbury. As we came out on the porch on the south side of the Normal University building, Dr. Edwards, who was kindly showing us about, stretched his arm out in a sweeping way toward the south campus and said: 'The trees you see here have all been planted by the Honorable Jesse W. Fell. And there he is now, planting still others,' he said as he pointed toward a man superintending the planting of certain shrubs or small trees. 'He is sometimes called,' Dr. Edwards remarked to my mother, 'Jesse, the tree planter.'

"My parents purchased a farm immediately north of Normal, where for ten years I lived, and from which for six years I trudged back and forth to school. Mr. Fell was a favorite of mine, as he was of all the children, so far as I know. He was kind to us and let us play without disturbance wherever he was working, provided we did not interfere too much with the progress of the work, and sometimes, I think, even when we did. I remember my mother's saying once that Mr. Fell was a real public benefactor, and I wondered what that was, and asked her what she meant. 'A public benefactor,' she said, 'is a man who is doing things for the benefit of other people all the while, and especially for the benefit of the community in which he is living.'

"I think there could be few better descriptions of Mr. Fell and his work than this.

"I should like to emphasize on this occasion the service which this community is rendering to itself by this formal recognition of the great work which Mr. Fell did for it and

for the successive generations which will make up this community in all the years to come.

"Now, the process of civilization is not by any means an easy one, and every higher civilization is brought forth in pain and tears, and the human race tends steadily to fall behind unless efforts are continually put forth which involve blood and sweat. History has shown that in nearly every country and in nearly every time this work of standing, in season and out of season, for the forces which make for the uplift of the community, this standing for the right against the wrong, for the light against the darkness, for freedom against slavery, for justice over against injustice, for equal opportunity for all over against monopoly and slavery, has been the privilege and the burden of comparatively few members of the community—those men whom we call leaders, those men to whose call to advance we respond, those on whose leadership we recognize and follow.

"Jesse W. Fell was one of these men, and this community, thanks to his leadership and men like him, thanks to the original constitution of the community, made up of many different elements from many different parts of the country, has moved forward steadily to an ever completer life as one of these fundamental cells of national existence.

"I am greatly pleased to see that this community recognizes the great significance of an event like this—namely, the erection of a memorial in honor of the men who have done things worth while in the community, especially in honor of the men who saw the best things that were possible to the community and stirred up and spurred it on to realize these best things. It was not merely the work Mr. Fell did himself directly in planting these trees, in urging the improvement of the schools, in bringing one after another of the public agencies into more efficient action, but it was his work in stimulating other people to emulate his example. And one of the evidences that you have done this is not only to be seen in the external evidences which we can see around us in improved schools, in paved streets, in improved water supply, and in enlarged and improved churches, in adequate drainage, etc., etc., but one sees it also in this willingness to acknowledge an indebtedness to the men who are wise enough to lead such enterprises.

"I have often said to members of the Illinois Legislature when presenting to it the claims for the support of the institution which I have the honor to represent here today, that the people of Illinois have vested for the time being in them the trusteeship for determining the level upon which the community shall move.

"In other words, the member of a legislature, the member of a city council, the member of a board of trustees, should be a projector. He should have visions, and those should be visions of the higher life of the community and the higher level upon which the community may walk, and the fundamental purpose of his trusteeship is that he shall help the community up to those higher levels and hold it steadily and true to its higher levels. This was the work as Mr. Fell conceived it, and to which he gave unsparing industry and absolute devotion, and because you recognize that end, because you recognize, even though unconsciously, in large part, that somehow or other this is your interest projected in this large way to this seer and prophet, you are willing to honor him by this beautiful memorial. He cares nothing about it, of course. His family in a few years will care nothing about it. It will not be long until everyone will have passed away who ever saw Mr. Fell, or who ever saw anybody who ever saw him, or spoke to him, and the personal element will disappear as the years go on, but this monument will ever stand here to remind the boys and girls of this community, as they play about its foundations—the men and women who pass by—that here was a man who deserved well of his community; and they will be led by the existence of this monument to ask what he did and why and how, and the story will ever again be told to bring new inspiration and new life into each succeeding generation.

"Monuments of this sort are erected not to flatter living men, but to call the attention of the boys and girls of each successive generation to the things that are most worth while in the lives of the members of their own community; to the things that men will be most grateful for; to the things upon which the community will lay the most weight; to the things that men will think about after one has passed out.

"Monuments of this sort help us to teach in a concrete and direct way to our children what are the really worth while

things in the development of a community and a nation, and so I have always been in favor of seeing them erected in honor of men who have done really great and useful things. It is an honor to Mr. Fell that the people of this generation; that you, standing about here, few of whom knew him personally, few of whom could really have had any conception of the largeness of the man's mind and activities, erect this monument to him. It is a much more significant, much more hopeful, and to my mind much more useful service which this memorial will do by virtue of the fact that it is an honor to the community which has raised it, for you honor yourselves far more than you honor him in the events of this day.

"From the contemplation of this gateway, let the little boy and girl learn the humble lesson of picking up the papers and other rubbish which are flying over the streets, which they perhaps have themselves thrown there. Let the citizen living in a humble cottage with a few square feet about it realize that as he keeps that lot, as he improves that lot, he is doing a duty by his community and by his fellowmen that will help raise the standard of life in the community as a whole. Let every man of influence and power and wealth and resources in the community recognize that it is a part of his business to work to improve these conditions under which the life of this community must be carried on; that it is a part of his business to see that the schools are improved, that the churches are supported, that the public institutions of all kinds are made as efficient for their purpose as they can possibly be made. Let the member of the city council have borne in upon him the conviction that a public office is a public trust, and that the man who violates in any way the interest of the community for any purpose whatever, whether it is in violation of the law or not, is a scoundrel, is an unworthy citizen, one who ought not to walk in the shadow or come into the same street where a monument has been erected to such a man as Jesse W. Fell. With such a spirit, with such a life, we may be sure that this primal cell of our great republic can give an example in its local health which all other similar cells of the nation might follow."

President John W. Cook of the Northern Illinois Normal School spoke at length on matters which he had known and

seen during his personal observations of Jesse W. Fell. He said, in part:

"Memorial structures are the efforts of a grateful people to celebrate in imperishable material the virtues of those who have wrought well for their kind. They are an endeavor to keep active and beneficent in the lives of men those wholesome and regenerating principles that were the springs of action of the characters in whose honor and whose memory they are erected.

"We are met here today to give meaning to this graceful entrance to these beautiful grounds. If the words we shall say could, by some art of the magician, be an open book for the passerby, its significance would be for the aspiring and sensitive mind an evangel, for we are to tell the story of a man whose supreme ambition was to promote justice throughout the land. He sought the freedom of the slave from the cruel tyranny that gave the lie to our fundamental political principle. He championed the cause of freedom and toleration in religious belief. He defended the sacred privilege of freedom of speech when the cause that he regarded as the noblest in the annals of mankind was attacked. He fought the battle for the care of the orphan of the man who had given his life for his country. He built about the community of his love the high wall of protection against the tempting devil of drink. He fostered with liberal hand the institutions that make for the rule of reason in the world. He fought with relentless energy corruption in high places and in all places. He sought no public recognition and aspired to no place of honor. He was content to fight for the good cause in his own way and with no ulterior end to subserve. Such a character is rare enough to merit especial recognition and to have dedicated to his memory a perpetual reminder of his virtues.

"And first of all, I wish to say that I know of no place more fitting for his memorial than here. Beside this ever flowing and inspiring spring of life, where youth is breaking the seals of futurity and forecasting high destiny and striving for its ample realization, let an indestructible reminder of his career defy the ruthless hand of time. As the years shall come and go and the long processions of the young shall pass through this noble gateway, let them receive a new and perpetual baptism of that generous spirit which is aptly characterized by

his immortal friend—'With malice toward none, with charity for all.' And let there be a fitting volume writ in simple phrase that shall tell of him and of his gracious life, and on each recurring birthday of the institution that he did so much to found and foster, let his name be spoken so those who go out to help to make the new and better commonwealth shall keep his spirit in the transforming energy of their lives.

"You would like to know about his personal appearance. He was of medium height, spare of figure, and with a face full of intelligence and light. You have become familiar with it as it is portrayed by his picture, that hangs in the reception room of the main building. He was the most industrious of men and Judge Davis declared him to be the most energetic man that he had ever known. With this estimate I am in entire agreement. Even in his walk there was a slight inclination forward, as if he could not keep his body apace with the plans which his busy brain was ever organizing. He it was who carried out the original plans for the decoration of the campus. It was a treeless plain before he began his work upon it. There could not have been found in all its area a riding whip for a horseman. He prepared for it by circling the root of the superb evergreens with which his home place was crowded, and when the clump of solidly attached earth was ready for removal he personally superintended the transfer of these great trees to the already prepared field. He had zealously cultivated it in the preceding year, so that everything was in readiness. At this task he worked with more physical energy than any of his helpers. I never heard of one of the transplanted trees that disappointed him. In consequence, the campus was transformed in a single year from a bare prairie to a place of beauty.

"Indeed, so intense was his physical activity that he found it difficult in his more advanced life to induce his body to take the requisite amount of sustenance to keep the fires burning hot enough for his demands, and I recall a conversation in which he related his annoyance that the machinery, upon which he had been accustomed to rely with such complete confidence, would not steam in harmony with his expectations. And this physical energy was but the concomitant of his mental energy. He was afire with enthusiasm. He subordinated all of his fine endowment to the leadership of his splendid will.

And all who came within the range of his influence caught the contagious inspiration. Was he a visionary? It never seemed so to me, for his large plans, with few exceptions, rounded to noble consummation. I am quite convinced that the one disappointment of his life was the failure of the plan to secure at Normal the location of the University of Illinois. It has always been my understanding that the offer of this county far surpassed that of any other. What it was that defeated his undertaking I have never learned. I well remember that historic contest and the alternating hopes and fears that filled the minds of our people.

"Mr. Fell is aptly described by the familiar phrase, 'a gentleman of the old school.' By this is meant that he was characterized by a courtliness of manner quite unusual in these less chivalrous days. He was a careful observer of the canons of etiquette and employed them in his relations to others with strict impartiality. Politeness has been defined as 'the ceremonial form in which we celebrate the equality of all men in the substance of their humanity.' To be a human being was to win his respect and to receive the homage he conceived to be due a human being. I have seen him rise in a crowded street car and offer his seat to a poor negro woman, with the irresistible grace that was his wont. That she was a woman was enough to win his recognition as entitled to the conventional courtesies of polite society. And with him they were far from being formal ceremonies, for there was always shining through them the knightly spirit of the true cavalier. His kindness of heart was always evident, and he was scrupulously careful lest he should inflict pain when dealing with the humblest.

"As a writer he was unusually engaging. He had the art of speech when his pen was in his hand. When I knew him he shrank from public addresses, but earlier in his life he was a rapid, terse and forceful speaker. His letters best illustrated his gracefulness of expression.

"One cannot but linger fondly over these memories, and before turning to other aspects of his rich and varied life I must be permitted to quote briefly from his loving friend of many years, former President Richard Edwards. In the address which Dr. Edwards delivered at the funeral in Normal Hall, he said: 'Let me begin by saying that Mr. Fell was an

honest man. He had so many other high qualities that we are in danger of not observing this. * * * He who has been through the intensest activities of life, through those scenes where selfishness, duplicity, corruption are most apt to have full sway, and who has come out of it all with a maiden sensitiveness to anything like unfairness or dishonesty, deserves our esteem. * * * He kept his hand clean and his heart pure. He committed no false or foul act. He entertained no debasing or unworthy thought. So sensitive was Mr. Fell to this principle of rigid honesty that I have known him to insist upon making good pecuniary losses sustained by his friends through the dishonesty of other men, because he had been the means of making the parties acquainted with each other."

"To this testimony of Dr. Edwards I may add that any indiscretion on the part of men in public life made hot his indignation. He would have none of them henceforth. There are men still living in Bloomington who were members of a political convention held there on a day almost fifty years ago, in which instructions were sought for the county delegation to assist in the renomination of a public official. I may add that I was the candidate's cordial supporter, as I was during his long subsequent official career. Mr. Fell, however, believed that he had broken faith with some of his friends and opposed him with such vigor that he succeeded in securing the adjournment of the convention after a scene that defies description. His opposition defeated the desired renomination and resulted in the temporary retirement of the candidate from public life. Prominent in that historic struggle were a few men whose names are household words in this community. Their number was small, but under the rallying enthusiasm of Mr. Fell their effectiveness was irresistible.

"In further view of this aspect of Mr. Fell's character, Hon. James S. Ewing, at the memorial meeting of the Bloomington Bar Association, in an exquisite tribute to his memory, said: 'It is a good thing to have known one man whose life was without spot or blemish; against whose honor no man ever spoke; who had no skeleton in his closet; whose life was as open as the day, and whose death comes to a whole community as a personal sorrow.'

"Similarly, Hon. Joseph W. Fifer: 'Jesse Fell was one of the moral heroes. He was the product of our free American in-

stitutions, and I am proud that he was an American citizen. His pure, manly and unselfish life will help to teach the world the only true basis of a lasting thing, which consists in doing good and the making of others happy.'

"And now that I have tried in these brief minutes to tell you something of his personality, you will anticipate his family that had been identified with the Society of Friends from its origin about the middle of the seventeenth century. That he would ally himself with the anti-slavery party was thus a foregone conclusion. Like men of his kind, he was an ardent admirer of Henry Clay, with whom he became personally acquainted and whose name he perpetuated in his own family by conferring it upon his only son.

"Although bitterly opposed to slavery, Mr. Fell had not identified himself actively with the Abolition party.

"And now I am going to make a claim for Mr. Fell that I have not thus far come upon. I cannot resist the conviction that there originated with him an idea that made him an historic character and thus identified him personally and potentially with tremendous events that were world wide in their consequences.

"Here are some simple statements whose correctness is amply verified by Hon. Owen T. Reeves, Hon. Adlai E. Stevenson and Hon. James S. Ewing.

"On September 12, 1854, Senator Stephen A. Douglas came to Bloomington to make a public address. He stopped at the old National Hotel, at the corner of Front and Main streets. Lawrence Weldon, then engaged at the practice of law at Clinton, came up to hear the speech and went with Mr. Ewing and Mr. Stevenson to call upon the Senator. Shortly after, Mr. Lincoln, who had probably come up from Springfield for the same purpose, came in to pay his respects to the honored guest. After a brief conversation Mr. Lincoln withdrew. Shortly after, Mr. Fell entered the room and was cordially greeted by Judge Douglas, for they were old acquaintances. The tide of conversation ran along in the usual way for a time, but Mr. Fell had an especial purpose to subserve. He therefore said to the judge that there was much feeling over the question of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and that many of Mr. Lincoln's friends would be greatly pleased to hear a joint

discussion between himself and Mr. Lincoln on these new and vital questions that were so vitally interesting the people.

"Judge Douglas seemed much annoyed, and after hesitating a moment, said: 'No, I won't do it. I come to Chicago. I am met by an old-line Abolitionist. I come to the center of the State and am met by an old-line Whig. I go to the south end of the State and am met by an administration Democrat. I can't hold the Abolitionists responsible for what the Whig says; I can't hold the Whigs responsible for what the Abolitionists say, and I can't hold either responsible for what the Democrats say. It looks like "dogging" a man over the State. This is my meeting. The people came here to hear me and I want to talk to them.' Mr. Fell said: 'Well, judge, perhaps you may be right; perhaps some other time it may be arranged.' And so it was that Mr. Fell did not carry his point for that meeting.

"But Mr. Fell did not give up the idea of the joint discussion. It was his pertinacious following of the scheme that gave to the country that memorable series of illuminating addresses, unsurpassed in all the annals of debate, in which the supreme question, the question of fate, in the forum of a nation, was held up to the reason and the consciences of men.

"Who doubts for a moment the effect of those debates upon the destiny of Abraham Lincoln?

"I cannot resist the conclusion that this remarkable train of sequences logically followed Mr. Fell's resolute purpose, as foreshadowed in the brief incident that I have related.

"But again. After the first debate at Ottawa, Lincoln came to Bloomington for a conference with friends from all parts of the State. Judge Reeves is responsible for the statement that Mr. Fell was present at that conference, as we should fully expect. At the Ottawa meeting Judge Douglas had propounded to Mr. Lincoln a number of questions to be answered at Freeport. Mr. Lincoln told his friends that he should give an answer to those questions, and he also told them that he proposed to propound certain questions to Judge Douglas at that meeting. Among them was this one: 'Can the people of a territory, in any legal way, against the consent of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from a territory prior to its admission as a state?'

"The members of the conference saw clearly that if Judge Douglas should answer this question in the affirmative he would certainly be elected to the Senate, for there were many Republicans favorably disposed to him because of his attitude toward the administration. It was believed that he would so answer. Lincoln saw that although such an answer would close his hope for the coveted senatorship, the South would never nominate so uncertain a candidate in 1860. In consequence the conference therefore protested against the submission of such an interrogative and voted against it with a single exception. That exception, I need not say, was Mr. Fell. Did his stand in the premises account in any way for Lincoln's reply to the conference: 'Judge Douglas may indeed defeat me for the Senate, but he will at the same time defeat himself for the Presidency in 1860, and that is a far greater issue.'

"Prophetic words! They were verified to the letter. Did Jesse Fell's support of Lincoln's plan fall into the casual series again? Who can answer?

"Did this modest man ever allow himself to trace the conclusions of the successive syllogisms to the final conclusion? Dr. Edwards besought him to write a frank and free autobiography and he really began it, but his modesty soon got the better of his resolution and he gave it up, declaring that he could not bring himself to the task. If he had only been willing to write a book of "Recollections" what revelations we might have had!

"I said, a few minutes ago, that he championed the cause of freedom and toleration in religious matters. This he did especially in the part he took in the organization of what was long known as the Free Congregational Church of Bloomington.

"Which of two of the major differences that formerly drove sharp lines of social cleavage among men arouses the bitterer controversies, religion or politics? We of the present know little of the implacableness of the hostility which formerly existed between men who were in separate political camps and who affirmed belief in separate religious creeds.

"Imagine, then, the introduction into the institutional life of Bloomington of an organization that seemed to be indifferent to a body of doctrine that was regarded by the great

majority of men and women in the west as indispensable to give validity to any rightful claim to the name religious. Such a phenomenon appeared in July, 1859. I have not time now to trace its history. Of course, the Fells, Jesse and Kersey, were there. Let it suffice to say that an organization was effected and that Charles G. Ames, predestined to a notable career, was called to conduct the Sabbath services of the Free Congregational Society.

"Of course, Mr. Ames would speak his mind on the slavery question. He did so, and some of his parish were so offended that they withdrew. But Mr. Ames was incapable of bitterness. While he preferred that they should stay, he could not deprive himself of freedom of speech to retain them, for freedom was the principle upon which the society was founded.

"Before his nomination Mr. Lincoln dined with Mr. Ames. The "Irrepressible Conflict" was thoroughly discussed, Mr. Ames taking very advanced grounds. Upon leaving, Mr. Lincoln said: 'I am as strong an anti-slavery man as you are, but I recognize some practical difficulties in dealing with it that you do not seem to see.'

"I am deeply conscious of the need of brevity, but I must be permitted to relate a single additional incident in this connection. One of the successors of Mr. Ames was Mr. Ellis, whose pastoral relations were very abruptly discontinued. He was a strong Abolitionist, and was so extreme as to have been one of those who volunteered to attempt to rescue John Brown from his Virginia captors. On April 23, 1865, when the country was speechless with grief over the tragic ending of the life of the great President, Mr. Ellis preached a sermon in Phoenix Hall in which he took occasion to criticise Mr. Lincoln in severe terms.

"It is easy to imagine the effect upon the Bloomington audience of such an address, and especially at such a time. In the hall were many of Mr. Lincoln's personal friends, men who were bound to him not alone by political ties, but also by the bonds of warm affection. Here and there were soldiers recently from the front, whose veneration for the murdered chief magistrate was greater than for any other character in American annals. Here was Mr. Jesse Fell, the man to whom in 1860 Mr. Lincoln had addressed his autobiography, and one can possibly imagine how his heart must have been wrung by

so ruthless and so utterly foolish a violation of the canons of the most ordinary common sense. The speaker was hissed and hooted, and escaped by the back stairs to a drug store near by, from which he was rescued by Mrs. William Lewis, a resident of Bloomington, and taken to her home. On the succeeding Monday the address was published in full and may be found, as may Mr. Ames' funeral sermon, in the files of *The Pantagraph*. As opportunity was thus offered to read exactly what Mr. Ellis has said.

"But nothing could induce Mr. Fell to do violence to his principle of free speech and a free pulpit. At the next meeting of the society he offered a series of resolutions denouncing the interferences with the speaker's explicit right to be heard, however unpalatable his utterances might be. This single illustration of his fidelity, under the most trying circumstances, to a principle which he regarded as a fundamental necessity in a free country, lifted him in my esteem to the serene heights of supreme manhood.

"No time remains to give other illustrations of those qualities which mark him off so distinctly and so superbly. Yonder on the hill is the home of those wards of the State who, orphaned by their fathers' devotion to the country, were deprived of that parental care which is the due of every child of our common humanity. It is there because of his philanthropy and patriotic zeal. Here rises the noble buildings of an institution to which thousands of grateful hearts turn with the most tender emotions. He wrought the deed, far more than any one else, that brought it here. We walk between these double rows of trees that he planted. One day he told me why he was impelled to adopt this particular plan. It was because he had happened to be in old Germantown, Pennsylvania, in the heat of a summer day. As he walked beneath the over-arching branches that met above his head, he determined to go to his new home and imitate the thoughtfulness of an unknown benefactor.

"That I knew him, and had at least some modest share in his regard, has been one of the greatest gratifications of my life. Among my treasures is a memento which he ordered sent to me as he lay upon his couch of pain from which he realized he should never arise. Thank God for all of His heroes. They lift the world to the arching sky and leave an open door be-

tween the earth and the heavens. He was one of that great company and lived his life of simple devotion here in our own little community. Great souls need no hilltops for their homes in order that they may be singled out as the benefactors of mankind.

"His memory is a precious treasure, and as the new generations come and go this memorial structure will retell the inestimable worth of this simple, unostentatious man."

Captain J. H. Burnham spoke briefly, because of the lateness of the hour. He touched upon incidents of Mr. Fell's life which the other speakers had passed.

Captain Burnham's subject was, "A Philanthropist of Mighty Vision." "Jesse W. Fell was a lover of mankind and a man of mighty vision. He loved his family and was never happier than when in their midst, planning and working for their future welfare. He wisely planned for the benefit of his adopted town, for the County of McLean, for the State of Illinois, for the nation, for the freedom of the slaves, and always labored for the good of all mankind.

"As early as 1834, when for two years he had lived in Bloomington as its first lawyer, he spent nearly a whole session of the Illinois Legislature at Vandalia, and, almost unaided, prevented the western tier of townships from being sliced off from McLean County in the interest of a new county seat. His clear vision told him that only thus could the new town of Bloomington retain its prestige and the new County of McLean preserve its grand outline, and the service he then performed has never yet been sufficiently appreciated.

"In 1845, when the State of Illinois was in imminent danger of repudiating its enormous bonded indebtedness, and was about to be driven into hopeless bankruptcy by incompetent leaders, Mr. Fell published an open letter to the Senate and House of Representatives, boldly advocating the imposition of taxes, and he eloquently urged the policy of re-establishing the State's financial credit upon a sound and reliable basis. The plan which he recommended was followed in the main. His vision told him that this State's magnificent agricultural domain could only thus be put in the way of its subsequent wonderful development.

"In the various periods of railroad building in 1838 to 1881, he was always a vigorous leader. He was either a projector

or a railroad official in every scheme for a north and south or east and west railroad in this vicinity. He secured a large portion of the right of way for the Chicago & Alton railroad from Bloomington to Joliet, and was the chief agent in the donation of the machine shop site in 1853, and thus secured for Bloomington the immense advantages which have followed, and which will no doubt permanently continue.

"While we are considering some of these, almost marvelous achievements of this great man, we may reflect that no doubt his active and vigorous mind contemplated a project which was never carried out to a successful issue. His vision was so broad and his mind dwelt so intensely on benefiting his fellow men that we can well conceive that he must often have felt the want of practical co-operation in some of his most heartfelt projects.

"Mr. Fell once told me that at a very early day, when wearily riding on horseback along the line of the present Illinois Central railroad in company with General Gridley, they discussed the possible luxurious improvements likely to be enjoyed by future travelers along the iron rails which they hoped would follow their route. How pleasant must have been his reflection in after life when all, and more than all, that his prophetic vision had predicted actually came to pass in the lifetime of this earnest and brilliant railroad advocate.

"The present generation needs to be told, on this and other appropriate occasions, of Mr. Fell's almost superhuman exertions in behalf of all suggestions and plans for the advancement of the religious, educational, moral, agricultural and community development of his neighborhood, the county, the state, the nation and the whole world in which he lived, but this paper can touch only a few of his characteristic efforts in the directions indicated.

"The man who planned our Normal campus, who planted with his own hands many of its grandly spreading trees upon a broad and almost desolate prairie, and who planted thousands of others in the streets of Normal—twelve thousand of them before Normal was anything but North Bloomington—no doubt had a vision of what their noble grandeur would be in fifty or sixty years, and perhaps believed that some of them would survive for centuries, and in their final enormous growth in this rich soil would carry forward to future observ-

ers some remembrance of their origin. But the same man, in giving names of trees to no less than thirteen of the streets of Normal, perhaps never realized in his own modest mind that he was thus preserving for all time a most beautiful and touching reminder of his affectionate love for the town he had founded. Normal is truly indebted to the charming visions which must have occupied the founder's thoughts during this labor of love for coming generations.

"In the early part of 1867, when the grand effort was being made in this county to secure the location of the Industrial University, which is now the Illinois State University at Champaign, Mr. Fell's efforts were little short of miraculous. Very few of us realized the actual possibilities of the university idea, but from the success which had then already been exhibited at the Michigan State University at Ann Arbor, it is evident that Mr. Fell had in mind almost a complete vision of what is now to be seen at Urbana and Champaign. Had that institution been located here and had it been properly fostered, what a boom Normal real estate would have secured! That it would have been fostered here was proved by the fact that notwithstanding Mr. Fell's bitter disappointment which it took years to heal, he nobly seconded the effort made in 1870 to induce the State constitutional convention, then in session, to provide in the new instrument, for very liberal permanent assistance to be given to the great institution. Mr. Fell grandly and magnanimously took the lead in this effort.

"We ought to give a brief notice of Mr. Fell's efforts to have this State adopt the Maine liquor law at the June election in 1855, and we must not forget the remarkable steps he took in 1867, to perpetually prevent the sale of liquor in this town of Normal.

"We shall also find that there has been running through all of Mr. Fell's life efforts a never-ending thread of elevated thought and action in behalf of great public questions. He never forgot the poor and needy, and by his wise advice and counsel he placed many a poor man in the way of future comfort and competence. Some of these were ex-slaves, for whom he had a peculiar sympathy. From the very first he was active in his opposition to slavery, and gave most effective aid to the great cause of freedom through his wonderful assistance in bringing Abraham Lincoln's abilities to the notice

of the people, both before and after 1858. He was enthusiastic in advocating Lincoln's nomination and election to the presidency. It is the candid opinion of good judges that no single individual in the United States performed more important services, everything considered, in bringing about the election of him who has proved to be the nation's idol.

"The statements embodied in imperishable bronze upon the tablet dedicated here today are most admirably calculated to impress and inform future generations as to the most important characteristics of this great man—this noble-hearted philanthropist—although it will be almost impossible for those who never had the good fortune of his personal acquaintance to realize the grandeur and great modesty of his character. It appears proper to add that such was the simplicity of the man that we may well believe he never anticipated he would be deemed worthy of such public remembrance as has been manifested today, or had any idea of its possible occurrence."

Mrs. D. C. Smith, as president of the Woman's Improvement League, presented the gateway to Prof. O. L. Manchester, as mayor of the town of Normal. She said:

"As president of the Woman's Improvement League of Normal, the pleasing task is mine to present to the town of Normal, through you, its mayor, the stone gateway just erected, at the east entrance to this campus in memory of Jesse W. Fell.

"It is a tribute of love from his many friends, far and near, who admired him while he was with them and who now honor his memory.

"The bronze medallion portrait upon one of the main posts is a gift from the grandchildren, and is dedicated by them with affection to the grandfather whom they knew and loved.

"The League is exceedingly pleased to know that the town has authorized you to present this gateway for perpetual preservation to the Illinois State Normal University, thus linking together the university and the town in further memory of him who was the friend and lover of both.

"The members of the League feel a sense of pride, pardonable, I trust, in the fact that they have been permitted to bear some humble part in the erection of this memorial gateway and they cherish the hope that in the years to come, many who look upon it and pause to study the portrait and read the

inscription it bears, may be inspired with Jesse W. Fell's rare public spirit and be moved to walk in his ways."

The closing addresses were given briefly by Prof. O. L. Manchester, for the town of Normal, and by Mr. Charles L. Capen, who accepted the gateway on behalf of the school and spoke feelingly of the occasion.

Mr. Capen had known Jesse Fell. He spoke of him in words of reverence; retraced, in some brief measure, the words of other speakers and added his own thoughts as a final word to what had already been said. Mr. Capen has the interests of the Normal University much at heart, and in his appreciation of the memorial gateway there was the feeling that its value was great as an inspiration to the younger generations who would pass through it, look at the bas relief, and read the words that touch the deepest chord in the life of the honored man.

The handsome decorations were presented by A. M. Augustine, and he was assisted in placing them by John R. Dodge, Dudley Lufkin and Thomas Billings.

The American flag used on the platform was the property of the Sons of Veterans' Camp of Normal. The new Illinois flag was also used. It was presented to Hon. Lewis G. Stevenson by Mrs. George A. Lawrence of Galesburg, and by him loaned for the occasion.

The gateway was designed by O. C. Simonds of Chicago, and the artist has been very successful in creating a design that while simple is most impressive.

The bas relief of Jesse W. Fell occupies the front side of the column at the right of the gateway. This sculptured brass was made by Theodore Spicer Simson of New York. He also produced the tablet which will occupy a corresponding position on the column on the left side of the gateway. On this tablet are inscribed the words:

To the Founder of Normal,
Jesse W. Fell,
Friend of Education,
Lover and Planter of Trees,
Philanthropist of Mighty Vision,
This Gate is Dedicated by
The Woman's Improvement League
and His Many Friends.

The lanterns which surmount the center pillars are striking parts of the whole. They are massive bronze lanterns of unusual design and were made by the Victor S. Pearlman Company of Chicago, and they harmonize with the entire design for the gateway.

Celebration of the Seventieth Anniversary of the Founding of Bishop Hill Colony.

On September 23, 1916, at Bishop Hill, Henry County, Illinois, was held a home-coming and reunion in commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the famous Swedish communistic colony, called Bishop Hill. Some of the colony buildings are in an excellent state of preservation and are in use.

Here one could see the old church just as it was in days when services were held there under the guidance of Eric Jansen,* the founder of the colony. The old seats are just as good now as they were the day they were built. They are all of real black walnut and were made to stand the wear of years. The altar and all of the properties of the church are there intact. For this festive occasion the relics, all that could be gathered for the day, had been crowded into the upper floor of the church building and were viewed with much interest. The paintings of the early settlers, all done by the late Olaf Kraus, were re-arranged for the occasion, and his interpretations of the early life and character of those who made Bishop Hill famous were of peculiar interest on this, the seventieth anniversary.

Some of the old colony buildings were thrown open for the day and the one main building, wherein lived over 100 families at one time, found many admirers.

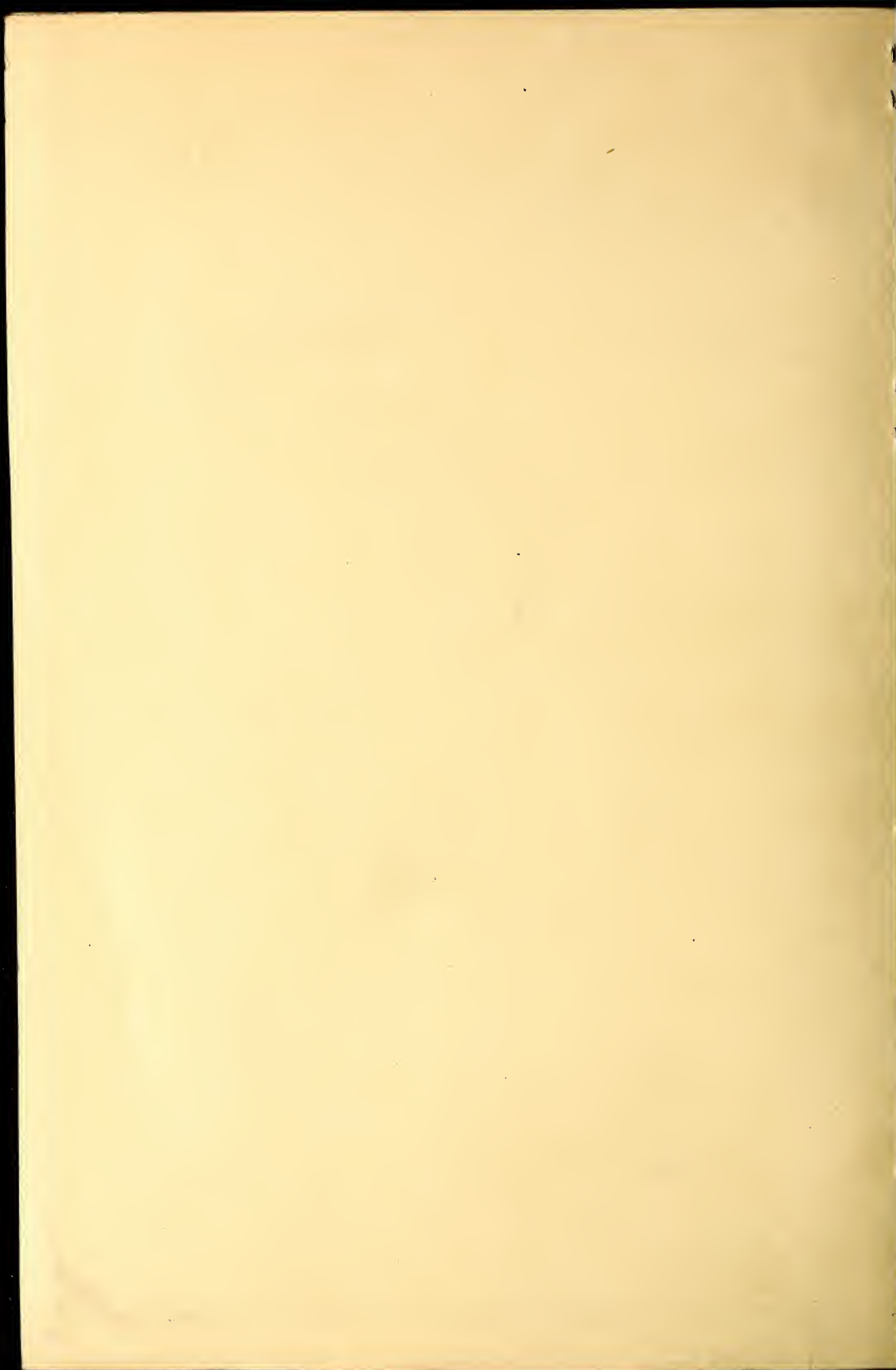
The old Steeple building and the clock, made years and years ago in Sweden, and which is still running, were of more than passing interest to those gathered there for the day.

At 10:30 Jacobson's orchestra played a selection, and then the Rev. A. G. Peterson of Bishop Hill offered prayer. A song by the chorus, and then P. J. Stoneberg, who is the chief historian of the colony, gave the address of welcome. Mr. Stoneberg said, in part:

"Seventy years have passed since founding of the Bishop Hill colony. It was in July, 1846, that Eric Jansen, together

*Eric Jansen, born December 19, 1808, in Bishopskulla Parrish, Upland, Sweden; died May 13, 1850. He was shot by John Root.





See pp 178-9

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ODYSSEY OF AN AMERICAN CANCER SPECIALIST OF A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

RUTH T. FARROW

Editor's Note: The author, a former teacher of social science in the West Side High School, Newark, is a graduate of the Trenton Normal School, New York University, and New Jersey Law School. Her interest in the subject of this article stems from her aunt's memories of his family. The author, through her mother, Katherine Rounsaville Farrow, is a direct descendant of Richard Rounsaville (ville) who came to New England in 1687 and moved to Burlington County, New Jersey, where he died in 1704. His son Richard who died near Flemington in 1755 was the grandfather of another Richard who built the stone house in 1832 where the portulaca bed was later to be located. The foot-log leading from this stone house across the Musconetcong River became a focal point of evidence in the famous Carter-Parke murder trials of a hundred years ago.

(Reprinted from *Bulletin of Medicine*, Vol XXIII, No. 3, May-June, 1949).

Present day realization that cancer is the deadly enemy of all living creatures has caused thinking people everywhere to form a common front against it. Surgeons in operating rooms, scientists in laboratories, explorers seeking curative plants in tropical jungles, contributors to "Mr. Blanding's Dream House" and the Damon Runyon Fund, these and countless thousands are working to one end—the discovery of the causes of cancer and the means of preventing and eradicating it. Yet, over a hundred years ago, an American doctor thought he had solved the cancer problem and so well did he press his claims that famous doctors abroad attended his clinics and were so much impressed with his work that he was asked to demonstrate his technique in a great London hospital. The only traces of his work to be found to-day are hidden in the dusty archives of medical libraries or in long forgotten medical journals; but, in his heyday, he had originated a new surgical technique in his field, was the author of a much discussed book on cancer,¹ and the first foreigner ever to be permitted to practice in a London hospital,² and this by invitation of the Board of Governors of the hospital. That American cancer specialist was Dr. Jesse Weldon Fell.

My personal interest in Dr. Fell springs from an almost for-

¹J(esse) Weldon Fell, *A Treatise on Cancer and Its Treatment*, xii, 95 pp., London, J. Churchill, 1857.

²Sarah M. Fell, *Genealogy of the Fell Family in America*, Philadelphia, A. H. Sickler, 1891, p. 208.

gotten incident of my childhood. I was helping my mother plant portulacas and she told me that the first ones she had ever seen grew in her grandmother's garden at the family homestead near New Hampton, in northwest Jersey, and that the seed had been brought to her grandmother by the famous Dr. Jesse Fell who had picked it on the Battlefield of Waterloo. When I asked her why Dr. Fell was famous and what he was doing at Waterloo, she replied that he was a well known cancer specialist of London and that as a young man he had lived near her grandfather's house and been friendly with the family so that, in after years, when he revisited his native land, he called on them to renew old acquaintance. She also said that he was reported to have treated a member of the royal family but this I have been unable to verify although the rest of her story has proved to have been based on fact. Her grandmother planted the portulaca seeds and saved others as they ripened and, as long as she lived, her garden was bright with portulacas.

Mother's story slipped from my mind but, years later, while engaged in research on an old Jersey murder case, I found a Jesse Fell named among the witnesses and I remembered the portulaca incident. I questioned a ninety-four year old relative and learned that "Jess," the witness, and Dr. Jesse Fell were one and the same man. Later, a western relative sent me some old books which had been in my great grandfather's family and among them was one inscribed with the name "Jesse Fell" and the date, 1842. This series of coincidences so intrigued me that I set out to find what I could about this man whose name kept bobbing up into my life. I had made some progress on the American part of his story when material came to hand which substantiated my mother's story for the most part and gave valuable information on Dr. Fell's life and travels abroad. This information was found in a letter which Fell had written to an old college chum in America.³ In commenting on the

³M. F. Ashley Montagu and W. J. Musick, "A Yankee Doctor in England in 1859," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. XIII, 1943, pp. 217-228. (Will be quoted as: Fell, *Letter*.)

letter, its editors said, "Concerning Jesse Weldon Fell it has been possible to learn precious little."⁴ I read the letter and it occurred to me that since I knew so much of Dr. Fell's personal life and was studying his professional career, others might be interested in my findings. The war and the bombing of London made research necessarily slow but now I feel that enough loose ends have been picked up to enable me to tell the story. But first I must warn you that *my* Dr. Fell is not the "I do not like you, Dr. Fell" of the old verse. That disliked gentleman, Dr. John Fell, one-time Bishop of Oxford, was just a very, very distant relative of our subject.

It was difficult to trace the paternal background of Jesse Weldon Fell because so many men of his family had the same name and it took much time and patience to disassociate his record from those of other Jesse Fells who were notables in their way. The Fells⁵ were vigorous in thought and action and the pioneering spirit seems to have been strong in many of them. They were of English origin, their six hundred years old manor house "Longlands," in Cumberland, remaining in the family ownership down to our own times. The first Fell⁶ to emigrate to America came in 1705 and settled in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. He later returned to England where he died in 1748, leaving behind him a numerous progeny in America. There his son Joseph became the father of the Jesse Fell (Judge Fell) after whom our doctor and other Jesses were to be named. The Fells were Quakers and the widow⁷ of one of the name became the wife of George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends. Although many of the American members of the Fell family left the Quaker faith and joined other religious bodies, Dr. Fell's grandfather was always faithful adherent of the Society of Friends.

"Judge" Jesse Fell,⁸ as he was commonly known, was born at Buckingham, Pennsylvania in 1751. He married Hannah Welding and it was by changing the spelling of her maiden

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 217

⁵Sarah M. Fell, *op. cit.*, p. 14

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁷Margaret Fell of Swarthmore Hall, Cumberland, England.

⁸S. M. Fell, *Genealogy*, p. 50.

name that her grandson received his middle name of Weldon. Judge Fell was the proprietor of an inn at Wilkes-Barre which was run in accordance with strict Quaker principles and was such a notable success that it is still remembered by the people of that city. Entering politics, he was twice elected Sheriff of Lucerne County⁹ and later served as Associate Judge of that County for over thirty years. Although he was a successful farmer and the first President of the Lucerne County Agricultural Association,¹⁰ it is not on his excellence as a tavern keeper nor on his political, judicial, and farming careers that his fame rests. He was the inventor of a grate which would burn hard coal¹¹ and it was, in part,¹² due to his invention that the anthracite beds of Lucerne County became valuable, and modern industry possible!

Judge Fell conceived the idea that hard coal would burn in a grate if a natural draft could be sent through a fire on which a sufficient amount of coal had been placed in the proper position.¹³ He made his first grate of green hickory wood¹⁴ and, when convinced that he was on the right track, collaborated with a nephew in fashioning one of iron. He invited his neighbors in to see its first trial but, to his chagrin, only two appeared. The others thought that the judge must have taken leave of his senses in believing that coal would burn in a grate, or that he was making them subjects of a practical joke. For the two who came, however, seeing was believing and news of the Judge's invention spread like wildfire. Every family wanted a coal burning grate; for all time anthracite coal had come into its own. Fifty years later, some townsmen of Wilkes-Barre gathered at the old Fell Inn to commemorate the anniversary of his invention by burning some anthracite coal in his

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 51.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹"The 'Invention' of Anthracite Coal," (i.e. the use of hard coal in connection with a natural draft), *Heating and Ventilating Magazine*, vol. I, December, 1904, pp. 209-211.

¹²Oliver Evans is credited with having anticipated Fell's invention in 1803, but the Judge did not know this fact in 1808.

¹³*Heat. and Vent. Magazine*, p. 209.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 210.

first grate.¹⁵ Evidently the Fell atmosphere acted as an incentive to further achievement for out of this anniversary meeting grew the Wyoming Valley Historical and Geological Society.¹⁶

A second Jesse Fell (Jesse W.)¹⁷ merits our attention because he influenced the course of American history at a critical point in our national destiny. He was born in 1808, the year of the Judge's invention. His father, after whom he was named, was a hatter but the son determined to become a lawyer and worked for his board in order to secure the necessary schooling. His education finished, he walked from Pennsylvania through Ohio into Illinois, and lived in the same boarding house as Abraham Lincoln, whose close associate he became.¹⁸ Tiring of law, he sold his practice to David Davis,¹⁹ entered the real estate business and became the founder of several towns. When a depression bankrupted him, he worked to pay his creditors in full and, turning to farming, he became interested in forestry. He pioneered in the planting of trees,²⁰ an enterprise for which the state has been profoundly grateful. He served as trustee for Ohio Wesleyan and was largely instrumental in securing the establishment of the first state supported institution in Illinois, the Normal School. But his services to the nation far outweigh his service to his adopted state. He was the first person to suggest to Abraham Lincoln that he should become an active candidate for the presidency;²¹ and it was at his request, and for his use that Lincoln penned his famous autobiography!

Fell was a Whig and after the Lincoln-Douglas debates, he visited the eastern and middle states and learned at first hand the favorable reaction of those sections to Lincoln's part in

¹⁵V. L. Maxwell, Lecture (2nd), "Mineral Coal," read at Institute Hall, Wilkes-Barre, Penna., Feb. 1858. Wyoming Historical and Geological Society, *Proceedings and Collections*, 4th ed., 1883, pp. 30-32.

¹⁶Hon. E. L. Davis (founder), Address, Feb. 10, 1883, *ibid.*, p. 43.

¹⁷Robert Dale Richardson, *Abraham Lincoln's Autobiography*, Beacon Press, Boston, Second edition, Preface.

¹⁸Frances I. Milton Morehouse, "Life of Jesse W. Fell," *University of Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences*, vol. V, June, 1916, p. 19.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 27.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 106.

²¹R. D. Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. viii.

the debates.²² Returning home, he told Lincoln that he had become a formidable candidate for the presidency,²³ and advised him to write an account of his early life for circulation in western Pennsylvania.²⁴ Believing that he had absolutely no chance of winning the nomination, Lincoln refused,²⁵ but later relented and wrote the autobiography²⁶ which every schoolboy is familiar with. This he gave to Fell who forwarded it to Pennsylvania where it was published in the form of a news letter in the *Chester County Times* of February 11, 1860. The influence of the autobiography has been tremendous. In 1860, it answered the question "Who is Lincoln?" and put the common people of the country²⁷ squarely behind Lincoln's candidacy. Since that time it has been the corner stone of Lincoln biographical literature.²⁸ An interesting fact about the sponsor of the letter, Jesse W. Fell, is that, although he was a Whig of prominence and a party leader, he refused public office for himself.²⁹

But it is high time that we turn our attention to the immediate family of Dr. Jesse Weldon Fell. His father, Dr. Samuel Fell,³⁰ son of the coal burning judge, was born at Wilkes-Barre in 1788. He graduated in medicine in 1808 and began practicing in Sussex County, N. J. Later, he located at New Hampton, Warren County, where he married Lydia, daughter of the Major Henry Dusenberry³¹ who had been one of Washington's aides at the Battle of Monmouth. Fell was considered a good doctor and won considerable reputation as a surgeon.³² His confreres called him a "doctors' doctor" because

²²*Ibid.*, p. 4.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. viii.

²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. xiv.

²⁸*Ibid.*, note 1, p. 17.

²⁹S. M. Fell, *Genealogy*, p. 140.

³⁰John Blane, *Medical History of Hunterdon (N.J.) County*, Newark, Jennings & Hardham, 1872, p. 235.

³¹S. M. Fell, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

³²James P. Snell, *History of Warren and Sussex Counties*, Philadelphia, Everts & Peck, 1881, p. 511.

of a successful operation for strangulated hernia which he performed on Dr. E. Everett of Sussex.³³ Two facts indicate that he was not a practicing Quaker. He served as captain of a Warren County company of volunteers known as The Washington Greens³⁴ in the War of 1812, and he was very fond of fox hunting. This last fact may have resulted in his death for he is reported to have died as the result of a fall from his horse while following the hounds.³⁵ He was practicing at Belvidere, New Jersey, at the time of his death and died at the age of thirty-six, leaving a widow and three children. The youngest child, a boy of six, was Jesse Weldon Fell, the subject of our study.

Jesse Weldon Fell³⁶ was born at Belvidere on September 30, 1819. He received his early education from the famous teacher, the Rev. John Vanderveer, and later studied under the Rev. John McNair. In 1839, he married Catherine Menagh Dunn and settled with her in Port Colden, Warren County,³⁷ where he clerked in a relative's store. Jesse probably inherited his energy and initiative from both sides of his family for his Dusenberry relative was truly a man of action, although, unlike the Fells, his dream proved to be without substance. When he learned that the Morris and Essex Canal would run through his part of northwest Jersey, William Dusenberry³⁸ thought that he knew the spot where a thriving metropolis would spring up at the western end of the canal. There he built a store, a church, and other buildings to house the expansion he envisioned, but luck passed him by and Washington, N. J., became the thriving town he had thought his settlement would become. With the usual sardonic country wit, his neighbors labeled his village "Dusenberry's Folly." To counteract their ridicule, he named the place Port Colden in honor of Governor Cadwallader Colden of New York, and the hamlet is still

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴The author's great grandfather was first lieutenant in this company.

³⁵J. P. Snell, *op. cit.*, p. 511.

³⁶S. M. Fell, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 207.

³⁸Snell, *op. cit.*, p. 714.

known by that name. It was in William's Port Colden store that Jesse clerked.

But Jesse was too much of a Fell to be satisfied to end his days as clerk in a country store and he determined to follow in his father's footsteps. He was twenty-two when he moved his growing family to the Dusenberry homestead at New Hampton and began the study of medicine with the resident physician, Dr. Robert McClenahan.³⁹ In the autumn of that same year, 1842, he located his family at 155 Spring Street, New York City, and enrolled in the Medical School of the University of New York from which he was graduated two years later. He began his practice in New York City and was one of the founders of the New York Academy of Medicine when it was organized in 1847, three years after his graduation from medical school. His association with the Academy, however, was not to prove a happy one and his experiences with some of its members may account for his decision later to locate permanently in London. A study of The Academy records⁴⁰ does not clear up the matter at issue between Dr. Fell and the dissenting members of the Academy but the bare facts seem to have been as follows.

On January 13, 1847, Jesse W. Fell signed the roll of founders⁴¹ and at the meeting of the Academy held on February 24th, he was appointed temporary librarian in the absence of Dr. Thomas W. Markoe.⁴² On July 5, 1848, he offered his resignation as a fellow of the Academy,⁴³ but, on motion, the resignation was laid on the table.⁴⁴ It was taken up at the stated meeting on August 2nd and, on motion, referred to the Committee on Medical Ethics.⁴⁵ Fell paid his last dues in 1854 and the word "suspended" appears after the record of payment

³⁹S. M. Fell, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

⁴⁰New York Academy of Medicine List of Founders with Biographical Notes, compiled by Dr. Samuel Smith Purple. Undated manuscript.

⁴¹*Ibid.*

⁴²*Ibid.*

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

in Dr. Purple's notes.⁴⁶ But the dispute was not ended, nor the matter clarified, and the case dragged on for several years longer.

Meanwhile, Dr. Fell was passing through harrowing personal experiences. His wife died of consumption in 1853 and, of the four children born to the couple, only one, Jessie Helen, a child of seven, survived.⁴⁷ These troubles, coupled with his inability to compose his differences with the Academy may have led him to consider removing his practice elsewhere for it was at this time that he made a complete break with his old life. In May, 1885, he married Elizabeth Ayrault Smith,⁴⁸ a lady of Quaker extraction from Middletown, Connecticut. In that same month of May, accompanied by his wife and Jessie Helen, he sailed on a wedding trip which had as its main objective a visit to the Paris Exposition⁴⁹ of Napoleon III but which was, in fact, to end his professional life in the United States.

But the month before he sailed, Dr. Fell again tried to have his resignation accepted by the Academy. His new letter of resignation was dated April 4, 1855.⁵⁰ The letter was referred to Dr. Pond, Academy Treasurer, who on August 1st, made a specific report on the subject.⁵¹ On September 5th, the resignation was taken from the table and the matter again referred back to the Committee on Ethics,⁵² and when that body reported back on January 2, 1856, we finally get a clue to the matter at issue. The Committee made a "Special report in relation to the resignation of Dr. Fell, recommending that the Academy refuse him honorable dismissal in consequence of his alleged relationship with a certain notorious quack."⁵³ Evidently Fell had defenders present for the minutes continue,

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷S. M. Fell, *Genealogy*, p. 207.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁵⁰New York Academy of Medicine, Minutes of Meetings, 1885, 1856. Manuscript from safe.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

⁵²*Ibid.*

⁵³*Ibid.*

"A discussion thereupon ensued in which several members took part." On motion of Dr. Detmold, the resignation was again referred to the Committee on Ethics with instructions to take testimony and report back to the Academy as to what steps it were necessary to take in regard to it. But, on September 3rd, Dr. Warren, representing the Committee, made only an oral report as "the Committee was not yet prepared to make a final report." No further report has been found: whether the resignation was finally accepted, or whether "honorable dismissal" was denied is not known. But when we consider that Dr. Fell first tried to resign in 1848, and that his resignation was still hanging fire eight years later, it seems reasonable to conclude that he must have had some very able defenders as well as some pretty determined opponents. It seems that he had become associated with a Dr. Gilbert in devising a new method of treating cancer. Evidently, the New York doctors were of two minds—those willing to give the new method a hearing and those just as determined to oppose the innovation. While the controversy still raged, he was putting the ocean between himself and his detractors.

His party sailed on the good ship *Atlantic* and, landing at Liverpool, they proceeded to London where Fell proved to be an indefatigable sightseer but was disappointed with his first view of the Thames, "a dirty little stream about the size of the Lehigh at Easton."⁵⁴ The Exposition was next visited ("dear Paris"), then Holland, Waterloo (where he picked my great grandmother's portulaca seeds), Prussia, Germany and the Rhine, and other points of interest.⁵⁵ Fell had found much to admire in England and he decided to take up the practice of medicine there. He was happy in England for he wrote later, "Although I am a thorough American and think there is nothing in all creation to compare with 'my own, my native land,' I should leave England with regret."⁵⁶ Finances were no

⁵⁴Fell, *Letter* (see above note 3), p. 218.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

part of his problem.⁵⁷ He resided at 70 Warwick Place, Belgrave Square, N. W., near Buckingham Palace. Queen Victoria and other members of the royal family passed his establishment frequently but he was not impressed by her majesty. "She is a little, *plain (homely American)* red faced woman, looks as though she was fond of 'Beer & wine' &c—Prince Albert is a fine looking man—the children only so, so."⁵⁸ Other ruling monarchs he saw he thought a homely lot but he made a gallant exception in the case of the French Empress (Eugenia). "She is very pretty and looks more queenly than any."⁵⁹ His establishment was quite pretentious. He kept a carriage and coachman, a riding horse, two female servants, and a page at his London place⁶⁰ and, in the summer of 1858, occupied the house formerly "used by the Ex Queen of France, and where the duchess of Orleans died last may."⁶¹ The palace was a "splendid one, and magnificently furnished . . . it had 27 Beds in it—a splendid Library & fine paintings—the lawn and grounds delightful, running down to the river."⁶² But the upkeep was high. "I paid \$100 a week rent, and then we were obliged to keep 5 female servants, 2 Gardeners, coachman & footman—besides keeping up my establishment in London."⁶³ American visitors to London looked him up; Jenny Lind called on his family;⁶⁴ Barnum dined with him;⁶⁵ his daughter had a governess in the house and had been at school in Paris.⁶⁶

After settling in his London offices, Dr. Fell began to use⁶⁷ his original method of treating cancer. He did not publicize this fact at first as London friends had warned him that his being a foreigner and a stranger would mitigate against his securing the endorsement of the medical profession until the value of

⁵⁷"He attained an eminent degree of private practice—we need hardly say, that all practice in London, which is eminent, is also invariably highly lucrative." *British Medical Journal*, May 16, 1857, p. 416.

⁵⁸Fell, *Letter*, p. 222.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 224.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 224.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*

⁶²*Ibid.*

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 223.

⁶³*Ibid.*, pp. 225 f.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 228.

⁶⁷J(esse) Weldon Fell, *Treatise on Cancer and Its Treatment*, p. b.

his method had been proved by positive cures.⁶⁸ He also feared that unskilled hands might attempt to use his method without understanding its complexities, or might apply it in cases where no relief was possible, or under circumstances which might cause it to fall into disrepute,⁶⁹ results which he was unwilling to risk. Then again he felt that he was entitled to reap any financial benefits or any fame arising from its use, for, as he said, "The originator of a new remedy is often lost sight of when some leader in his profession adopts his method."⁷⁰

According to Dr. Fell, medical men of a hundred years ago were divided into two schools of thought as to the origin of cancer. One group thought that cancerous growths were purely constitutional while the other held that they were entirely local in nature.⁷¹ Dr. Fell thought that there was something to be said for both theories and that, while the original cancer generally began as a local growth, in time the patient's constitution became secondarily contaminated.⁷² While searching for a cure for both conditions, he became convinced that the remedy lay in the discovery of a curative plant rather than in the knife,⁷³ and that persons living closest to nature would prove the best source of information as to such plants. Pursuing investigation along these lines, he learned of a root which the Indians living on the shores of Lake Superior used for healing purposes⁷⁴ and, after considerable experimentation with this root, he finally originated a medicinal paste in which it was the chief ingredient. The Indians called the root "puccoon" but botanists call it the *Sanguinaria canadensis* because it exudes a copious stream of blood-like fluid when broken. It had long been recognized as a powerful emmenagogue and alterative and, as such, had been admitted into the Pharmacopoeia of the United States.⁷⁵ Dr. Fell first used the puccoon in a pure state on ulcerated surfaces but later combined it with other substances in order to hasten its action.⁷⁶ In time, he found that chloride

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p. b.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. vi.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. B.

⁷²*Ibid.*

⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, p. 58.

of zinc was the best medium for his purpose⁷⁷ and the compound made with it he used to such effect that, "Large ulcerated tumors were removed in the space of a few weeks and with little or no pain to the patient."⁷⁸ He next extended the treatment to non-ulcerated surfaces successfully, as he claimed,⁷⁹ and eventually perfected his compound which became known to the medical profession under the name of "Fell's Paste."

To apply the paste, shallow incisions were made about one-half inch apart in the eschar, great care being taken to avoid living tissues.⁸⁰ Paste was then spread on cotton strips and daily applied to the incisions.⁸¹ "This treatment was continued for a period of from two to four weeks when the disease was destroyed and the cancerous matter fell out, leaving a flat, healthy sore which generally healed with great rapidity."⁸² In addition to the external treatment thus used, Dr. Fell paid much attention to the general health⁸³ of his patients, ordering nourishing and sustaining food for them and administering the puccoon internally in small and repeated doses.⁸⁴ Where possible, he had his patients circulate freely out of doors, not only because he felt that the fresh air would benefit them physically, but also because the knowledge that their condition did not necessitate their being kept in bed served to keep up their morale and became a real factor in their recovery.

Dr. Fell devised a unique method of interesting London physicians in his compound and technique of treatment.⁸⁵ For over a year and a half after beginning his practice at 70 Warwick Square, he opened his consulting rooms to the members of his profession for the purpose of demonstrating his treatment to them. He says, "Over a hundred doctors, and some of them the most justly celebrated in the country visited my rooms and nearly all of them have spoken of my treatment in the highest terms and treated me with the greatest polite-

⁷⁷*Ibid.*

⁷⁸*Ibid.*

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

⁸¹*Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁸²*Ibid.*

⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, p. vi.

ness and liberality."⁸⁶ One visitor,⁸⁷ however, incurred his displeasure for "He visited me for six months and saw the treatment in every stage of application and later wrote an article published in the *Lancet* of 1857 without even mentioning my name or his visits to my rooms."⁸⁸ Some other visitors also proved ungrateful for "They carried off some of my remedies but this dishonest act availed them nothing as even hospital analysis failed to detect the vegetable potion in them."⁸⁹ But some of Dr. Fell's visitors were impressed with his work and, in 1856, the Board of Governors of Middlesex Hospital invited him to demonstrate his method in a series of experiments in the cancer wards of that great institution. To understand the importance of this invitation, it is necessary for us to know something about Middlesex Hospital and the conditions set up in the deed of gift for controlling the practices of its cancer ward. One of these conditions was to make considerable trouble for our American doctor, Jesse Weldon Fell.

Middlesex Hospital was founded in 1745 and, in 1791, one Samuel Whitbread donated the sum of £3,500⁹⁰ "for the relief of persons afflicted with cancer, and the investigation of a complaint which, though extremely common, is both in regard to its natural history and cure, but imperfectly known."⁹¹ Two requirements were set up as condition of the gift: the name of every patient treated was to be kept, and unusual cases were to be made a matter of special record, *and these records were always to be open to the public.*⁹² Later, other endowments were made and, in time, the cancer ward became a sort of experimental school as the Controlling Board

⁸⁶*Ibid.*

⁸⁷Edward S. Haviland, "On the Use of Chloride of Zinc in the Treatment of Cancer," *Lancet*, vol. I, Feb. 14, 1857, pp. 161-162.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, p. vii.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*

⁹⁰*Lancet*, vol. II, October 24, 1857, p. 426.

⁹¹The author regrets not to be able to find the source to which she owes this quotation.

⁹²"Middlesex Hospital Report on Cancer" (from the *Spectator*), *Living Age*, January, 1858, pp. 30-31.

made it available for the trying out of such new methods of treatment as were considered safe and proper to try.⁹³ The Board laid down two requirements which practitioners desiring to experiment in the ward had to meet: the proposed method of treatment must be explained to the surgical staff of the hospital before its trial could be permitted, and the demonstrator must consent to have his method made public within a reasonable time. Applications for permission to demonstrate, made from time to time by various doctors, were frequently rejected by the Controlling Board, which fact makes Dr. Fell's case the more remarkable. He did not ask for permission to demonstrate; the Board of Governors asked him to make a trial of his method at Middlesex Hospital.⁹⁴ He is reputed to have been the first foreigner ever to be permitted to practice in a London hospital!⁹⁵

In view of what was to come later from the same source, it is interesting to read an announcement published in the *Lancet* of the time. "We understand that Dr. Fell, the American physician whose treatment of this disease has of late been so much spoken of in London, has made an arrangement with the authorities of Middlesex Hospital, by which he has taken charge of a certain number of cases in the Cancer wards of that establishment, for the purpose of subjecting them to the action of his remedies. Dr. Fell has communicated, in confidence, the particulars of his treatment to the surgical staff, who will watch the cases and report on the results. *This experiment reflects great credit on the medical officers of the Middlesex Hospital.*"⁹⁶ Before consenting to the demonstrations, Dr. Fell imposed certain conditions to which the hospital authorities agreed.⁹⁷

1. He (in confidence)⁹⁸ was to tell the hospital surgeons

⁹³*Ibid.*

⁹⁴Fell, *Treatise*, p. vii.

⁹⁵S. M. Fell, *Genealogy*, p. 208.

⁹⁶*Lancet*, vol. I, January 31, 1857, p. 128 (Italics are not in the text).

⁹⁷Fell, *Treatise*, p. ix.

⁹⁸"Secret Surgery, and the 'Mystery Men' of the Middlesex." *Lancet*, vol. I, April 4, 1857, p. 358. This editorial constitutes a reversal of the previous position.

the nature of the remedies to be employed, their mode of preparation, and the manner of their use.

2. Twenty-five cases were to be subjected to treatment for a period of eight months.

3. He pledged himself to publish the full particulars of his system of treatment *within a period of six months from the conclusion of the experiments*; in case he failed to do so, the duty of publication was to devolve on the Middlesex Surgeons.⁹⁹

On January 22, 1857, the series of treatments began. During its course, Dr. Fell had entire charge of three wards and cared for an average of sixty patients.¹⁰⁰ He also had the pleasure of ordering "one of the self conceited would-be great men of the London profession out of my wards and made him go, to."¹⁰¹ (A *Lancet* representative met with refusal when he attempted to see some of Fell's patients.)¹⁰² While experimenting, Fell was working on his report and this, the *Treatise on Cancer and Its Treatment*, was published June 1, 1857, six months after their conclusion. The book was dedicated to the Middlesex Surgeons "as a slight acknowledgment of their uniform kindness and valuable assistance during my connection with them."¹⁰³ In it, cancer methods in general were discussed and the origin and particulars of his own method disclosed. Of the latter, he wrote, "This plan succeeded admirably and is believed to be entirely original." A preliminary report on the results of the experiments had been made by the Surgical Staff at Fell's request for inclusion in his book and this was dated March 18th, less than two months after the first experiment was begun. While stating that the limited period of the trial made positive conclusions impossible, it found that there were certain points on which the Fell treat-

⁹⁹Fell, *Treatise*, p. ix.

¹⁰⁰Fell, *Letter*, p. 224.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*

¹⁰²*Lancet*, vol. I, Mar. 28, 1857, p. 318.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, p. b.

ments showed distinct advantages over prevalent surgical methods. These gains, summarized, were as follows:¹⁰⁴

1. The treatment was in accord with known principles of surgery; was safe, ingenious, and easy to apply.

2. It could be employed in cases, both surgical and non-surgical.

3. Patients were not confined to bed or house and their health manifestly improved over those of ordinary cases by reason of exercise in the open air.

4. Exhaustion and hemorrhages arising from cutting operations of cancer were absent, and the patient less prone to constitutional affections such as erysipelas and pyaemia.

5. Enucleation of the diseased mass was succeeded by a healthy and cicatrized surface.

6. Treatment was less painful than usual under caustics; pains, when felt, were not in the tumor itself but in distant parts of the body.

"The undersigned have not as yet had time to ascertain the average duration of the benefits conferred by the treatment, nor have they any means of knowing whether, in the event of the return of the disease, there be any difference observable from what is known to take place after incision.

Signed

Alexander Shaw
Campbell De Morgan
Charles S. Morse
Mitchell Henry"

Fell closed his treatise by stating that, "Results show that out of every ten cases treated with puccoon, only three of the number returned for further treatments while the statistics of those operated on (according to the tables generally adopted by writers on the subject) show that from eight to eight and a fraction out of every ten cases return within two years. The first person suffering from cancer and treated with puccoon

¹⁰⁴Fell, *Treatise*, p. ix.

of whom I have any knowledge is still living in the enjoyment of good health although the disease was removed fifteen years ago."¹⁰⁵

With the possible exception of the Middlesex Hospital authorities, there evidently were not many members of the British medical profession who received Fell's work with kindly feelings for its author. While the reviews in the *British Medical Journal*¹⁰⁶ failed to take the matter seriously, the *Lancet*, which had directed a running fire of criticism against Fell and the Middlesex surgeons during the entire course of the trials, now outdid all previous efforts in holding them up to ridicule and censure. It spoke of "the magic influence of mystery—the omne ignotum pro magnifico," called Fell the "great 'mystery or medicine man' of the West," and said that, "Knowledge of Dr. Fell's secret has been dearly purchased by the sacrifice of the fair name of one of the London hospitals."¹⁰⁷ It was in the face of such criticisms that Dr. Fell completed his experiments and the Middlesex Surgical Staff made ready its final report on his work for the hospital authorities. The report was dated October 18, 1857, and was subsequently published by the order of the Quarterly Court.^{108, 109} That public interest in the Fell experiments was continuing is shown by an article from the *Spectator*, published in the *Living Age* of the following January¹¹⁰ which commented upon the Surgeon's Report, gave excerpts from it and, in conclusion, stated that, "The considered opinion of the Middlesex surgeons was that *the incisions constituted the chief value of Fell's work*. The use of zinc in cancer treatment was not new to them; the

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁰⁶Issues of June 27, 1857, p. 555, and October 24, p. 422.

¹⁰⁷*Lancet*, vol. I, June 13, 1857, p. 606.

¹⁰⁸*Report of the Surgical Staff of the Middlesex Hospital, to the Weekly Board and Governors, upon the Treatment of Cancerous Diseases in the Hospital on the Plan Introduced by Dr. Fell*. London, J. Churchill, 1857.

¹⁰⁹"We never read a bad Report so well worth reading . . . as a scientific report, or a literary composition, it is almost beneath criticism." *Lancet*, vol. II, October 24, 1857, p. 424.

¹¹⁰*Living Age*, 2nd series, vol. XX, January, 1858, pp. 30-31.

bloodroot seemed to have no effect when used internally and its external effect seemed limited to removing odors; but for the purpose of destroying cancer, it was inert."¹¹¹

That Dr. Fell smarted under the criticism his work met with at the hands of his British brethren is shown in his letter, written on March 13, 1859, five months after the Middlesex Surgeons' *Report* appeared. In it he wrote, "I can assure you that the *great Medical men* of London, look a mighty lot larger, and greater, when looked at across the Atlantic—they are rather small affairs, and as a whole they are the greatest set of Quacks, I have ever seen, I have many warm friends among them and of course I do not express myself here in the same way."¹¹² After enumerating their alleged faults and downright dishonesties, he closed the subject by saying, "I know of but two men whom I would trust to treat me if I was ill."¹¹³

In 1860, another Middlesex surgeon reported further on the results of the Fell experiments. "Amongst many patients, treated . . . in . . . 1857, there was a marked difference in the effects. In some it appeared to act in the same manner as erysipelas and hospital gangrene. Apparently, but in fact incompletely, removed, the disease reappeared in a few weeks; in those cases, however, in which caustics were carried through the cancer into healthy tissues, no such recurrence took place before the healing of the wound. After that event, the cases

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 31. For a fuller account of Fell's plan, the reader is referred to the original *Report of the Surgical Staff* (see note 108) or to the excerpts reprinted in the *Living Age*. The specific approval of the surgeons for the use of graduated incisions was given in the following statement. "We are of the opinion that this is its only, but its very great value. (They) constitute a new feature in the treatment of cancerous tumors for which we find no parallel in the writings of the past or in the practice of present surgeons . . . but the advantage placed in the hands of surgeons by the invention of gradual incisions, claims henceforth their very frequent adoption in the treatment of cancerous tumors, as well as a grateful acknowledgment of the ingenuity of their inventor" *Report*, p. 50, reprinted verbatim in the *Living Age*, p. 31).

¹¹²Fell, *Letter*, p. 223.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, p. 224.

treated by caustic followed the ordinary course of cancer. Disease reappeared, and death ensued as usual."¹¹⁴

Little is known of Dr. Fell's later years. His daughter was with him in London in 1859¹¹⁵ but, as she was married to Frederick Dellicker,¹¹⁶ an American, in New York City in 1862, it is probable that she returned to the United States with her father and his wife some time between those two dates. The *London and Provincial Medical Directory* listed Dr. Fell as practicing at the Warwick Place address in 1861, but the entry also stated that the listing was made without his knowledge,¹¹⁷ a fact which strengthens my belief that he was in the United States at that time. He probably gave up his Warwick Square offices before returning to the United States, but whether he remained in this country or returned to England during the Civil War period, I have been unable to learn. But, by 1871, he was back in London and was located at Campbell House, Tollington Park, Holloway, N.,¹¹⁸ where he continued the practice of medicine until 1889.¹¹⁹ Somewhere along the line he became a member of the British Medical Association¹²⁰ which fact shows that he was still held in repute professionally. The files of the New York Academy of Medicine record him as having died in 1890 but the London Medical Directories of 1890 and 1891 do not mention his name in the obituary notices. His wife died in 1888¹²¹ and it is possible that he may have returned to his native land after her death and died here. If he died in 1890, he was seventy-one years old and had survived the failure of his Middlesex Hospital experiments by a period of thirty-one years.

¹¹⁴C. H. Moore in: *A System of Surgery, Theoretical and Practical, in Treatises by Various Authors*. Edited by T. Holmes. Vol. I, General Pathology, London, Parker and Son, 1860, pp. 565 f. and 567 where Dr. Fell's method is described.

¹¹⁵Fell, *Letter*, p. 228.

¹¹⁶S. M. Fell, *Genealogy*, p. 383.

¹¹⁷I owe this information to the kindness of the Librarian of the Royal Society of Medicine.

¹¹⁸*The Medical Directory for 1871 and General Medical Register*. London, Churchill.

¹¹⁹S. M. Fell, *Genealogy*, p. 208.

¹²⁰*Medical Directory*, 1885.

¹²¹S. M. Fell, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

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NEW BRUNSWICK AS IT APPEARED IN 1825-1826

BY CHARLES D. DESHLER

Transcribed and edited by Elmer T. Hutchinson,
Corresponding Secretary, New Jersey Historical Society

(continued from April, 1950 number)

Across the Alley, on the opposite corner was a small, but quiet and respectable inn kept by George Williams; and beside it, a few feet back from the side walk in the alley, an artesian well had been bored, in the hope of getting a supply of good drinking water for man and beast. This hope was disappointed however, and the sole result of the enterprise was a continuous flow, through an inch iron pipe, of exceedingly ill-tasting water. An artesian well was a great novelty in those days, and the process of boring this particular one had been watched by our townfolk with eager curiosity. Although it failed to produce water that was good for anything, it was suffered to flow for a number of years; and an attempt was made at one time to attribute medicinal properties to the well, but without success, and at length it was allowed to go to ruin. Between William's inn and the corner of Peace and Albany streets there was only one house, and all that I

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III. Field's "Provincial Courts of New Jersey," 1849. (Out of print).

IV. "Papers of Gov. Lewis Morris" (1738-1746), 1852.

V. Stevens' "Analytical Index to Colonial Documents of New Jersey" in England. Edited by Whitehead, 1858.

VI. "Records of the Town of Newark, N. J." (1666-1836), 1864 "Supplement" thereto, 200th Anniversary of Newark, with Congar's "Genealogical Notices," 1866.

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VIII. Semi-Centennial Celebration of the N. J. Historical Society 1895.

IX. "New Jersey Biographical and Genealogical Notes," 1916.

X. "The Loyalists of New Jersey," 1927. (Not bound.)

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GOV. STEVENSON A 'COMPROMISE' FROM HIS BIRTH

Paradoxes Mark Career and Ancestry

BY JOHNSON KANADY

[Reprinted from yesterday's late editions]

Gov. Adlai Ewing Stevenson, Democratic nominee for President, once observed, "I was a compromise from the outset."

He meant from the day he was born, Feb. 5, 1900, in Los Angeles.

His father, Lewis Green Stevenson, was a Presbyterian and a Democrat.

His mother, Helen Louise Davis Stevenson, was a Unitarian and a Republican.

His grandfather, Adlai Ewing Stevenson, was a pro-slavery, pro-southern Illinois Democrat, who was accused of avoiding the Civil war draft in Illinois as a copperhead.

His great-grandfather on the other side of the family, Jesse W. Fell, was an abolitionist, and a friend and counselor of Abraham Lincoln.

Interested in Whole World

From these roots came Gov. Stevenson of Illinois, a Unitarian, a Democrat, a state righter who believes in federal compulsion. He was born in California, schooled in the east, and is an Illinois citizen whose area of interest is the world.

A northern, sometimes fair deal, Democrat, he is viewed by many in his party as the man who can best compromise the differences between those of the party in the north and the more conservative southern Democrats.

Stevenson believes he can bring unity to the party. His heritage is one of public service and political manipulation, altho Stevenson's first venture into the field himself was his spectacular half million vote victory for governor in 1948.

Conscious of Background

The remark that the Stevensons are rather like the Chinese in the matter of ancestor worship has been attributed to the governor's former wife, Ellen Borden Stevenson. While the governor does not exhibit the same interest in family history that his sister, Mrs. Ernest Ives, does, he is acutely conscious of his background.

Family records have been traced back two centuries and embrace a wide field of famous or near famous personalities. The first Fell to come to America, Joseph, did so in 1704. The first Stevenson arrived in 1748.

Jesse W. Fell, the governor's great-grandfather, arrived in Bloomington in 1833. Adlai Ewing Stevenson, the governor's grandfather, reached that city in 1852, a 16 year old boy.

Great Difference in Men

There was a great difference in these men. The elder, Fell, was credited with being one of those who gave Lincoln advice to run for President. He served in the Civil war, altho he was older than Lincoln.

Stevenson's total Civil war service, political researchers have reported, was 13 days in the safety of Springfield, Ill. He hired a substitute to take his place in the drafted army in 1864, and was charged later with being a member of the Knights of the Golden Circle, a notorious pro-Confederacy underground movement that had connections in England and Canada, and advocated, at one point, armed resistance to the Union.

The charges were branded as untrue, but no court action ever was taken against the individuals who swore to their accuracy.

Campaigned Against Lincoln

The first Adlai Stevenson campaigned against Lincoln three times—for Douglas twice and McClellan once—and his activity paved the way for future political recognition. He was a congressman twice, and was known as the "headsman" during the administration of President Cleveland for his services in getting rid of 40,000 Republican postmasters so they could be replaced by Democrats.

Preservation Grants Manual Available

The Illinois Department of Conservation's *Historic Preservation Fund Grants-in-Aid Local Participation Manual* is now available. The manual is designed to aid in preparing applications for historic preservation grants. To be eligible for this matching grants program, properties must be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For a copy of the grants manual, check your local library (copies are available through inter-library loan) or write:

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Deborra L. Kissel

IN MEMORIAM THE JESSE FELL HOUSE 1856-1980



Jesse Fell was a prominent Bloomington lawyer who developed professional and social ties with many early Illinois politicians. In the 1830s he struck up an acquaintance with Abraham Lincoln, who was then a member of the state legislature. Their friendship lasted until Lincoln's death.

Fell's political activities were but one of his contributions to Illinois history. He owned Bloomington's first newspaper, and he was an influential member of Illinois Wesleyan University's board of trustees.

In 1856 Fell designed and helped build a house in Normal. The two-story Italianate house had an octagonal cupola and a veranda on three sides. Fell and his family lived there until 1882. He died five years later.

Ownership of the house changed several times over the years, and the Fell House suffered major alterations. The cupola and veranda were removed and the interior was altered. In recent years the structure provided housing for students at nearby Illinois State University.

Local residents succeeded in having the Fell House listed on the National Register in April 1978. But in August the owner ordered it bulldozed.

Other buildings associated with Fell still stand. But his first home, believed to be the oldest house in Normal, is gone. On August 20, 1980, Bloomington's *Daily Pantagraph* noted:

Grooves and ruts from the tracks of heavy equipment are all that mark the lot at 502 S. Fell Avenue, where the two-story wooden house stood until last week.

William G. Farrar

